

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES - DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL DIRECTOR

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF DMH PRACTICE PARAMETERS

January, 2011

- I. DMH parameters identify critical factors to be considered in the provision of care for individuals served in LAC DMH, but are not comprehensive treatment guidelines. An in-depth knowledge of the clinical skills essential for the provision of quality mental health/substance use disorder services should result from ongoing clinical training and regular review of relevant literature.
- II. These parameters represent the consensus among DMH clinicians and other experts including those with expertise for the treatment of substance use disorders.
- III. These parameters apply regardless of the funding source for the treatment: Medical, Mental Health Services Act, Medicare, County General Funds, CALWorks, or other.
- IV. These parameters in no way substitute for the client/clinician dialogue and respect for clients that is at the core of sound clinical practice.
- V. These parameters are not absolute, but practice outside of such parameters requires special justification, documentation, and in some instances consultation.
- VI. These parameters are designed to encourage consultation, monitoring, and supervision at clinical sites rather than at more remote administrative locations, and to encourage education and training.
- VII. The specialized technical and interpersonal skills required by these parameters mandate specific education and supervision for all practitioners.
- VIII. Changes in current individual treatment regimens made for the purpose of conformity with these parameters should be initiated only after careful consideration of the original reasons for the current treatment.
- IX. These parameters reflect current interpretations of best practices, and may change as new information and techniques become available.
- X. Special efforts must be undertaken to respect the unique values, spiritual beliefs, lifestyles, cultural and personal experiences, anxieties, and need for autonomy that are at the core of working with all clients.